

# Heber Valley History

Mistake

The earliest Europeans to enter this Valley were two Franciscan Friars, Dominguez and Escalante who were looking for a passageway from Santa Fe, New Mexico to Monterey, California. From then until the first permanent settlements in 1858, only Indians and trappers traversed this Valley. The first permanent settlers were English Mormon converts who had been instructed by their leader, Brigham Young, to make a road up Provo "Kanyon" from Utah County, and search out building

timber for the pioneers in Utah and Salt Lake Counties. Until the late 1880's, the only newcomers to the Valley were Mormon converts from England, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Scotland, and Ireland. The Swiss converts settled the Midway area, and are the only ethnic group which retains some traditions of their homeland. Their city adopted a Swiss-style architectural motif, and they celebrate Swiss Days each year (Labor Day weekend) with Alpine costumes, parades, entertainment

and a Swiss market.

After lumbering, the first industry in this Valley was farming, which has lasted even to the present day. Dairying and its products followed shortly thereafter; they remain as one of the Valley's most important industries. John Murray Murdoch, a Scottish shepherd, organized the first large cooperative sheep herd in the Valley in 1862. This industry flourished for many years, peaking in the late 1940's and 50's when this Valley was known to be the greatest sheep shipping capitol in the USA. Although sheep ranching retains a strong presence in the Valley today, the numbers have greatly declined due to problems of cheaper imports, predators, and lower prices. Cattle ranching has also been significant and followed soon after the sheep industry. Although the market has declined in recent years, it is still widely practiced. The first mining activity began about 1858, after Col. Patrick Connor allowed some of his California Volunteers to prospect for minerals. This industry grew in Keetley and Park City and has contributed immensely to the local economy. Depressed metal prices have dealt serious blows to

the area's mining industry in recent years, and it now lies dormant. The main economy of the Valley has been slowly shifting from the agricultural to tourism and recreational basis.

Even a brief history is not complete without mentioning the significance of horses in the Valley. From the early days, when they

were a necessity, to the present day when they are raised for pleasure and recreation, horses have always had a strong presence here.

(A more detailed history of the early days of the Valley, including names and dates of the early founders, is available from the Heber Valley Information Center.)

**1988 TIMETABLE**



**HEBER CREEPER**  
Scenic Stream Railway and Western Village

600 West 100 South  
Heber City, Utah 84032

531-6022  
Salt Lake City

Special Luncheon  
Trains Available  
Reservation Only

654-2900  
Heber City

1988 DAILY SUMMER SCHEDULE

Spring Excursions	May 7-May 22	Sat. & Sun.
Summer Season	May 29-Sept. 5	Daily



**Heber Valley IS**  
**"The Valley of the Horses"**



# Heber Valley History

*They did  
not come  
into Valley*

*Conceived  
by Heber C.  
Kimball*

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### HEBER CREEK

#### Scenic Stream

#### Railway

and

#### Western Village

600 West 100 South  
Heber City, Utah 84032

531-6022

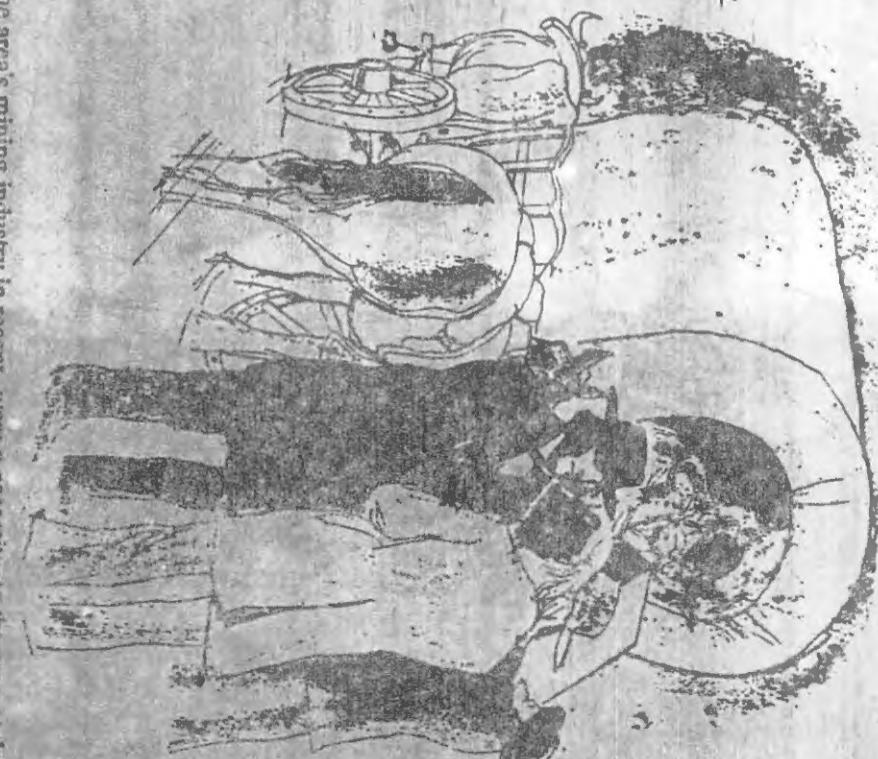
Salt Lake City

Special Luncheon  
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**The Valley of the Horses**